



My Reference: OPCC/WYCA/KJ

Your Reference:

Kit Malthouse MP  
Minister of State for Crime and Policing  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

18 August 2020

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 5 June and further recent communications with your officials confirming the intention to press ahead with the Mayoral Combined Authority model for policing governance transition for West Yorkshire.

You asked that we use the public consultation period to understand the feasibility of a potential 2021 transfer of PCC functions to the Mayoral Combined Authority, and to undertake an assessment of any insurmountable barriers to this. We are writing to you now to set out the results of this work and to confirm our ambitions to deliver such a transfer in line with the first West Yorkshire Mayoral Election on 6 May 2021.

Over the consultation period our respective officers have been working with your officials, West Yorkshire Police and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to scope the scale and feasibility of a 2021 transfer. A transition working group has been established to collaboratively determine a work plan which could enable a transfer to take place, and to develop a fuller understanding of the work required to help facilitate this with the aim of no disruption to provision of services. This group has concluded that while there is a significant amount of work to be undertaken and some specific complexities around the National Police Air Service (NPAS), there are no insurmountable barriers to the transfer of functions from the PCC to the Mayoral Combined Authority in May 2021. Albeit, this is in recognition of the unique circumstances in West Yorkshire to achieve this challenging transition timeframe as part of the wider devolution deal, and without prejudice to the Government's wider PCC review.

We recognise the Government's ambition to drive local accountability and clearer decision making on policing matters as set out in the recently announced review of the role of PCCs. Combined with our shared ambition to ensure alignment between policing objectives with regional priorities and services, we are therefore supportive of the move to a MCA model which includes the PCC functions

Clearly though, as indicated, there is significant work to be undertaken to deliver a 2021 transfer and preparations are well underway to this effect, including the commissioning of a comprehensive due diligence exercise. This exercise will provide an understanding of the scale of the transfer, the mechanisms necessary to transfer PCC functions, as well as the instruments and resourcing required to enable this. The final report is due in early September and will comprise a comprehensive risk assessment and a critical path to a May 2021 transfer.

Officers are in regular dialogue to understand the work required, and the transition working group meets fortnightly to review progress. Your officials have been involved in these meetings and are aware of the complexities involved.

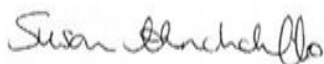
We have consistently made the case that to achieve a 2021 transfer there is a pressing and urgent need for more resources, expertise and capacity. As part of the feasibility work an estimate of the cost of additional resource required has been calculated in the region of £500,000. We would be grateful if you would consider with MHCLG and Cabinet Office whether there is an opportunity to make use of budgets previously allocated for the PCC election in West Yorkshire for this work instead. If this is not possible, please confirm what tangible support is available.

As previously discussed, a unique feature of the PCC functions transfer in West Yorkshire, is the transfer of the Lead Local Policing Body responsibilities for NPAS. The Combined Authority accepts it will be responsible for the governance and stewardship of NPAS, but recognises that a number of PCCs have raised their concerns and objections to the transfer, of which a summary will be sent to your officials. In order to address and ease these concerns we believe that a firm commitment should be made by the Home Office to transfer NPAS into a new national delivery entity within two years as part of this process and agreement. Additionally, the confirmation of a strong commitment and decision to agree the current business case for fleet replacement is now required, critically this will ensure that the service can continue to operate effectively now and into the future.

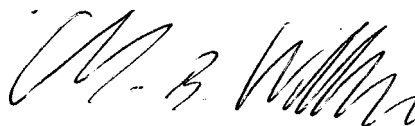
We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you at your earliest convenience, and will be in touch to agree a date in diaries when convenient for all.

We are copying this letter to Simon Clarke MP, Minister of State at MHCLG, and to the Chief Constable, John Robins.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe  
Chair, West Yorkshire  
Combined Authority



Mark Burns-Williamson OBE  
Police and Crime Commissioner for  
for West Yorkshire



Councillor Judith Blake CBE  
Leader of Leeds City Council



Councillor Tim Swift MBE  
Leader of Calderdale Council



Councillor Shabir Pandor  
Leader of Kirklees Council



Councillor Denise Jeffery  
Leader of Wakefield Council